

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

PC-01 EUR-12 MC-02 OPR-02 /073 W

----- 124043

R 201200Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5762

INFO AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGUI 0680

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CD, CT

SUBJECT: DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: BANGUI 0542 (NOTAL)

1. IN REFTTEL WE POINTED OUT THAT DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IN CAR WAS TENSE, AND THAT EXAMPLE OF SUCCESSFUL COUP IN CHAD WAS ONE ELEMENT. TENSION HAS CONTINUED SINCE AND MAY BE RISING.

2. BOKASSA, ILL WITH GOUT, HAS HOLED UP IN BOBANGUI AND SCARCELY BEEN SEEN IN BANGUI SINCE HIS RETURN FROM EUROPE APRIL 29. EVEN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' MEETINGS ARE HELD THERE.

3. PAY DAYS FOR GOVERNMENT WORKERS, INCLUDING MILITARY, GENDARMES AND POLICE, ARE ALWAYS CRITICAL PERIOD IN BANGUI AND FOR FIRST TIME IN LAST TWO YEARS SOME BANGUI CIVIL SERVANTS HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED PAY THREE WEEKS LATE AND LESS THAN WEEK BEFORE MAY PAY CHECKS ARE DUE. THERE IS COMMON BELIEF THAT BOKASSA FACES REAL CRISIS IN TRYING TO SCRAPE UP MONEY FOR MAY SALARIES.

4. ON MAY 17 BOKASSA RELIEVED GENERAL ANDRE KOLINGBA, COMMANDER
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OF THE CAR ARMY OF HIS DUTIES, LEAVING ONLY ONE ARMY GENERAL,

MAGALE. MEANWHILE HE HAS REPORTEDLY MOVED SOVIET ARMS TO HIS BOBANGUI FARM WHERE SOVIET MILITARY TECHNICIANS ARE TRAINING A SELECTED CORPS OF M'BAKAS IN THEIR USE. MORALE OF GENDARMERIE IS ALREADY LOW DUE TO ARREST THEIR CHIEF GENERAL. LINGOUPOU, LAST NOVEMBER AND NOW ARMY MORALE IS DECLINING MARKEDLY WITH ONE GENERAL RELIEVED AND NEW WEAPONS GOING TO ELITE CORPS FROM SINGLE TRIBE WHO RECEIVE HIGHER PAY.

5. THERE IS ALSO EVIDENCE OF DISSENSION AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. FOR FIRST TIME SINCE MY ARRIVAL HERE NO MINISTERS CAME TO A NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION AT SAFARI. SINCE PROTOCOL HAD PROMISED CAMEROONIAN AMBASSADOR NGO EARLIER IN AFTERNOON THAT THERE WOULD BE GOOD TURN-OUT, REASON LIES IN SOME EXTERNAL CAUSE PREVENTING THEIR ATTENDANCE, REPORTEDLY HEATED COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING AT BOBANGUI. GOCAR CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE SCHEDULED TO BE OPENED BY BOKASSA MAY 20 WAS ALSO POSTPONED.

6. RUMORS WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN WAKE OF ABOVE, RANGE ALL THE WAY FROM ATTEMPT BY BOKASSA TO EFFECT MAJOR CABINET RESHUFFLE WHICH IS MEETING RESISTANCE TO MEASURES TO PREVENT POSSIBLE PENDING COUP ATTEMPT. ALL WE CAN BE SURE OF IS THAT SITUATION IS NOT NORMAL AND POLITICAL EVENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE MAY BE PENDING.
DALE

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NNN

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